

2015 Muscogee (Creek) Nation
Festival schedule and map

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Festival entertainment

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MUSCOGEE NATION NEWS

Workforce sought for Margaritaville expansion

June 15, 2015

Job-seekers check out TERO job fair

Gary Fife/Radio Specialist

TULSA, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Tribal Employment Rights Office held the TERO Job Fair May 28 at the River Spirit Event Center in Tulsa to help find a TERO estimated 5,000 employee workforce to complete the \$329 million Margaritaville themed expansion of RSC.

The event pulled together contractors and sub-contractors from various disciplines to talk directly with job-seekers.

MCN TERO Director John Overacker said the goal is to find tribal citizens work on a reliable basis.

“Basically, what we’re doing is, we’re trying to get more of our citizens on our projects, to find them permanent positions with companies,” Overacker said. “So, the best way to do that is have a job fair where they can come in, fill out a form for our database, things like that.”

That database, he said, would provide a labor pool for when opportunities arise.

Beyond this, he hopes that



Gary Fife/MNN

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Tribal Employment Rights Office Director John Overacker listens to a hopeful job applicant at the TERO Job Fair held May 28 at the River Spirit Event Center in Tulsa, Okla.

these positions will branch out into long-term opportunities.

“Not only just at the site, place them with a company where they can move into the future and stay with that company and have a career, retirement and everything else that goes with that,” Overacker said.

Manuel Noriega, (Muscogee/Seminole/Hispanic) from Glenpool, was one of about 75 job seekers who attended the fair. He was trying to find something in the construction line, especially

plumbing.

He said there was one contact that looked promising.

“TD Industries, they’re going to do the plumbing at Margaritaville, so I hope to get on with them and hope that things take off from there,” Noriega said.

Muscogee (Creek) citizen Sylvia Bear from Fort Gibson was another job-seeker. Bear hoped to use her experience working with heavy equipment from the U.S. Marine Corps as the basis for possible jobs.

“I was a heavy equipment mechanic there and I’m not exactly certified civilian-wise, but I feel like I’m pretty adaptable to most hard situations,” Bear said.

The job search, she said, was a matter of finding the right fit for her skills and personal situation.

“I’m a single mom, so that kind of changes some of my requirements for a job and what I’m able to give to a job,” Bear said. “At this point, I’m just

Expansion - 2

MCNDH breaks ground on new Eufaula health center

Area to receive new expanded facility

Amanda Rutland/Media Specialist

EUFULA, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health along with tribal administrators gathered May 28 for a groundbreaking ceremony to launch construction of the new Eufaula Indian Health Center project.

The event was moved indoors to the Eufaula Indian Community Center in Eufaula due to rain.

The existing facility was constructed in 1979, is approximately 7,000 square feet and employs 48 individuals. Most of the 4,278 registered patients live within a 40-mile radius.

MCNDH Secretary of Health Lt. Cmdr. Seneca Smith said the current clinic only allows each provider two patient rooms, which is a hindrance for expedient care.

“The existing facility is outdat-



Amanda Rutland/MNN

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health along with tribal administrators gathered May 28 for a groundbreaking ceremony on the new Eufaula Indian Health Center at the Eufaula Indian Community Center in Eufaula, Okla.

ed, does not meet the space and requirements for the growth for existing programs for the future. Currently, the services within the clinic are provided through multiple locations due to space constraints at the current loca-

tion,” Smith said.

The new 73,000 square foot facility is a joint venture between MCNDH and Indian Health Services and will employ 160 people.

“The addition of this space

will allow for the expansion of services through the purchase of equipment to meet the user population needs to increase coordination of care by re-

Health - 4

MCN candidate profiles to be taken at filing

Prospective, incumbent
officials asked to be
photo, bio ready

Mvskoke Media/Media Release

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The ‘Muscogee Nation News’ will take candidate profile information and photos **on-site** during the filing period July 20-22 from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 1-4 p.m. for the 2015 Muscogee (Creek) Nation officer elections.

MNN staff will be on-hand during registration at the Tribal Conference Room on the MCN Tribal Complex in Okmulgee to take photos and workstations will be set up for those filing to fill out or submit their **100 total word limit** bios, which will run in the MNN Aug. 15 edition.

Bios should include, as available, candidates’: full name, district and seat they are running for, clan, tribal town, ceremonial ground and/or church, education/experience and campaign platform.

No information will be changed after candidates leave the polling area and photo submissions/retakes will not be allowed. Portraits cannot be used for candidates’ campaign material.

Word limits must be strictly adhered to and will be cut at staff discretion if they go beyond the amount allotted.

The profile submission period has been narrowed to quickly inform Muscogee (Creek) citizens ahead of the upcoming Mvskoke Media candidate forum, to be announced and absentee ballot deadlines.

For more information contact MNN Editor Sterling Cosper at: 918-732-7697 or email: scosper@mcn-nsn.gov.





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Ribbon-cutting held for new food distribution center



Darren DeLaune/MNN

Muscogee (Creek) Nation officials held a ribbon-cutting ceremony May 28 in Coweta, Okla., for the new MCN Koweta Food Distribution Center.

New facility launched in northeast tribal jurisdiction

Darren DeLaune/MNN Reporter

COWETA, Okla. — A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held May 28 for the new Muscogee (Creek) Nation Koweta Food Distribution Center in Coweta.

The new building, which is located next to the Koweta Indian Health Center, will serve as a distribution site for Native Americans who qualify and are in need of nutritional assistance.

This is the third distribution site within the MCN jurisdiction.

“This is a need in this area for the citizens who receive assistance through our program,” MCN Food Distribution Program Director Anna Sterner

said. “We went after a grant to get this building built and this is the result.”

MCN FDP serves low income Native American households, as an alternative to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Red Stone Construction Services LLC of Tulsa, Okla., constructed the 7,900 square foot

“THIS IS A GOOD LOCATION FOR THE NEW SITE. THIS BUILDING WILL BE PUT TO GOOD USE FOR OUR FAMILIES WHO LIVE THROUGHOUT THE AREA.”

– MCN PRINCIPAL CHIEF GEORGE TIGER

building, which will now serve over 300 families who live in the northeastern part of the MCN boundaries.

Before the new center, families in that region picked up their food from a tailgate site or made a trip to the Okmulgee facility.

“It was an inconvenience for our citizens who live in this area,” Sterner said. “Having this site will make it easier for the citizens.”

MCN Principal Chief George Tiger spoke about how this site is a great resource for the citizens.

“This is a good location for the new site,” Tiger said. “This building will be put to good use for our families who live throughout the area.”

According to Sterner, in the month of May, FDP served over 3,000 families within the 11-county jurisdiction.

“Having this site is a tremendous help not only to our department, but to our citizens and to our Nation,” Sterner said.

For more information on the new distribution site, contact Sterner at: 918-549-2401.

Miss Indian Oklahoma Pageant comes to MCN



Chelsie Rich/MNN

Carmen Sankey was crowned 2015 Miss Indian Oklahoma at the 46th annual Miss and Jr. Miss Indian Oklahoma Pageant May 14 at the Mvskoke Dome building in Okmulgee, Okla.

2015 royalty crowned at Dome building

Chelsie Rich/Project Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The Oklahoma Federation of Indian Women hosted the 46th annual Miss and Jr. Miss Indian Oklahoma Pageant May 14 at the Mvskoke Dome building in Okmulgee.

One of the goals of OFIW is to unite Native women from across the State of Oklahoma and create friendships through culture and traditions.

Five contestants competed for Miss Indian Oklahoma, while three competed for the Jr. Miss title.

By the end of the night, after cultural demonstrations, presenting platforms and impromptu questions, Carmen Sankey was crowned 2015 Miss Indian Oklahoma.

“I’m just really happy and excited,” Sankey said.

Sankey is an 18-year-old senior at Lawton MacArthur High School, is of Cheyenne, Arapaho and Comanche descent and is the daughter of Sheldon and Anna Sankey of Lawton.

“I’m just excited to what this year has to bring; to get to know all the tribes of Oklahoma... so I can represent them all,” Sankey said.

Sankey platform is promoting healthy lifestyles for Native Americans.

Faithlyn Seawright was crowned 2015 Junior Miss Indian Oklahoma.

Seawright is a 17-year-old junior at Latta High School, is of Chickasaw and Choctaw descent, and is the daughter of Larry Seawright and Gwen Burris of Ada.

Seawright’s platform is implementing Native awareness in schools by overcoming identity barriers.

The outgoing 2014 Miss Indian Oklahoma was Muscogee (Creek) citizen Jordan Harmon.

“It was a real blessing to have this title... I was really proud to be able to represent my platform of Native Americans in education,” Harmon said.

Harmon attends the University of Tulsa College of Law.

Harmon shared some advice to the incoming princesses about what the next year may bring.

“Times are going to get hard and it’s going to get stressful but you have to fight through the stress,” Harmon said. “Keep going and put a smile on your face and it will be great.”

Jordan Harmon is 23-years-old, from Tulsa and is a member of the Deer Clan and Koweta Tribal Town. She is the daughter of Shonday and David Harmon.

For more information about OFIW go online to: www.ofiw.org.

EXPANSION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

trying to find something that’s flexible with school and just be able to provide for myself and my daughter.”

She added that having so many potential employers in one spot makes the task a lot more manageable.

“Especially if you’re prepared, you can literally knock out ten interviews in a day,” Bear said. “That makes it easy for someone like myself.”

Bear thought her employment prospects were pretty good.

“I think as long as I’m constantly putting my best foot forward and presenting myself the best way that I can, being precise in my answers, I think I’m going to get a job,” Bear said.

Kent Staff from Tulsa attended, looking especially for jobs that did not require previous experience or training.

“Construction or laborer, something like that will be the easiest because I don’t have any skills other than that yet,” Staff said.

The fair filled a big hole in his job search.

“I think it is helpful that it’s here and they try to get people jobs,” Staff said.

Manhattan-Redstone TERO Coordinator Lauren Boche said the job fair was a major asset for companies like her own.

“I’m very excited about it. It gives our subcontractors a huge opportunity to build their manpower, not only for this project, but for their company,” Boche said. “It gets them well-known with an Indian Nation.”

MCN opens social services satellite office in Jenks

MCN Social Services/Media Release

JENKS, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Social Services satellite office in Jenks has officially opened to citizens.

Muscogee (Creek) citizens and citizens of federally recognized tribes who reside within the MCN boundaries will be able to apply for services including housing and utility as well as burial and energy assistance.

“Opening a northern satellite office for the Social Services Department is an exciting opportunity for the citizens of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, members of other federally recognized tribes and the Nation,” Social Services Supervisor Vicky Harrell said. “It is our hope to ease some of the miles and time most citizens cannot afford by offering those same services that are provided in Okmulgee here in the Tulsa area.”

The satellite office will serve those in Creek, Tulsa and Wagoner counties and portions of Mayes and Rogers counties. Citizens may apply at the location from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday.

Literacy Program announces holiday challenge winner



Chelsie Rich/MNN
Muscogee (Creek) Nation Literacy Program Project Manager Randi Narcomey-Watson presents Zane Hamilton with an iPad Mini April 23 at Wetumka Middle School in Wetumka, Okla., for being the winner of the Read and Win Holiday Challenge.

Hamilton receives incentive for reading

Chelsie Rich/Project Specialist

WETUMKA, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Literacy Program announced Zane Hamilton as the winner of the Read and Win Holiday Challenge and presented him with an iPad Mini April 23 at Wetumka Middle School in Wetumka.

“The program is for all citizens. It’s to help with literacy,” said MCN Literacy Program Project Manager Randi Narcomey-Watson.

The program’s mission is to provide all Muscogee (Creek) citizens and the MCN community with the opportunity to improve their literacy and preserve the Mvskoke language through a partnership with myON Reader, an online digital library.

“It’s an online reading system and it’s individually tailored to each student,” Narcomey-Watson said.

This online system gives access to more than 4,000 digital books. Each participant must take a placement exam to gauge their reading level and interests.

“The studies show that in order to help a child grow with their reading, is that you have to get them what they like to read and then where they should be reading,” Narcomey-Watson said.

The system uses the information to recommend reading material.

“What we usually do is to help generate some reading and some excitement from our kids,” Narcomey-Watson said. “We work with mostly the JOM and the school districts that have been using myON and we create chal-

lenges for them.”

This past challenge was designed for Johnson O’Malley, Muscogee (Creek) and Head Start students ages 3-18 and was based on the time spent reading from Nov. 3, 2014 – Jan. 16.

Hamilton is a 13-year-old, eighth grader from Wetumka Middle School and spent 19 hours and 52 minutes reading over 75 days.

“I read everyday,” Hamilton said.

The program assists students with reading, comprehension and vocabulary challenges they might face.

“It helps me in class,” Hamilton said.

The program is targeted to help students become college and career ready.

For more information contact: 918-261-3519 or visit: www.muscogeeecreekreads.com.

Muscogee (Creek) citizens named as Gates Scholars



Submission

Skeeter shares about academic success

Chelsie Rich/Project Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Out of 1,000 Gates Millennium Scholarship recipients for the class of 2015 from across the United States, 38 are from Oklahoma and five are Muscogee (Creek) citizens.

According to the website, the GMS program is funded by a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and was established in 1999 to promote academic excellence and provide an opportunity for outstanding minority students with a significant financial need to reach their highest potential.

Glenpool High School gradu-

ate Aubrey Skeeter is one of the five citizens who received the honor.

“Getting Gates means a lot to me because it proves that I did something right,” Skeeter said.

Skeeter is the second student from her high school to receive the scholarship.

While in high school, Skeeter was very involved and dedicated to her academics.

“I’ve just really focused on academics more than going out,” Skeeter said.

Skeeter graduated as class salutatorian, was president of the National Honor Society, Native American Student Association, Student Council and a member of her school’s softball and Muscogee (Creek) Nation Challenge Bowl teams. Skeeter was also the

2013-2014 Yuchi (Euchee) tribal princess.

Each of the 1,000 students will be awarded a scholarship that can be used to pursue a degree in any undergraduate major and selected graduate programs at accredited colleges or universities.

Skeeter plans to attend Colorado College in Colorado Springs, Colo., which is a private liberal arts and sciences college, where she plans to study biology and then go on to medical school.

“I want to come back, I want to end up working for the Creek Nation. I want to be able to provide public health care for the Creek Nation,” Skeeter said.

Skeeter shared how her parents inspired her.

“From the time I was in kindergarten and younger than that, my parents always told me, ‘you’re going to go to college; you’re going to go to college,’” Skeeter said. “It’s never been a question that I think I was going to go to college, it’s always been where I am going to go.”

Skeeter is the 18-year-old daughter of John and Denise Skeeter from Glenpool and a member of Duck Creek Ceremonial Ground.

The following Muscogee (Creek) citizens were also named as Gates Millennium Scholars: Blake Colburn from Checotah High School, Storm Mata from Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics, Yannah Wind from Weleetka High School and Holly Jamerson from Coconino High School in Arizona.

For more information about the GMS program visit: www.gmsp.org.

4-H participants polish public speaking skills



Jessica McBride/MNN
4-H participants prepare to give their speeches during the Muscogee (Creek) Nation 4-H Program Speech Contest May 12 at the College of the Muscogee Nation in Okmulgee, Okla.

Contest promotes life, career tool

Jessica McBride/Media Coordinator

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Cherokee Nation citizen Chelsea Crawford paced in the hallway of the College of the Muscogee Nation May 12, preparing for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation 4-H Program’s inaugural Speech Contest.

It was the Creek County High School sophomore’s first time to compete.

“I would like to be a (4-H) district officer so I’m going to try and get better at public speaking,” Crawford said.

- Herriman
- Illustrated presentation-junior division**
- First- Bethany Foster
 - Second- Jonathan Leopard
 - Third- Hanna Leopard
 - Fourth- Callie Davis
- PowerPoint- senior division**
- First- Chelsea Crawford
 - Second- John Luke Davis
- Speech- senior division**
- First- Dakota Neal
 - Second- Sarah Valenzuela
- Speech- intermediate division**
- First- Colt Robertson



Jessica McBride/MNN

Crawford was dressed in shoulder pads and a green football uniform.

“My mom plays women’s tackle football so I’m presenting how football can be healthy. To get fit, you can play football or you can play football for fun,” Crawford said.

Twenty-two youth from around the MCN jurisdiction gave a total of 31 presentations in the 4-H speech contest.

MCN 4-H Program Manager Billy Haltom said he was pleased with the turnout and has high hopes for next year’s competition.

Haltom believes the elements taught through the speech presentations are a valuable life skill.

“If I could only teach them one thing, that’s what I would teach them,” Haltom said.

Contest winners are as follows:

- Illustrated presentation-senior division**
- First- Corey Cecil
 - Second- Hanna Fletcher
 - Third- Brandon Cecil
- Illustrated presentation-intermediate division**
- First- Wyatt Wilson
 - Second- Makayla Crawford, and Darren and JoDawn

- Speech- junior division**
- First- Kaylee Herriman
 - Second- JoDawn Herriman
 - Third- Kelsey Smith
 - Fourth- Clarissa Smith
 - Fifth- Allie Allen
- First year ritual**
- First- Clarissa Smith
 - Second- Kelsey Smith
- Extemporaneous- senior division**
- First- Sarah Valenzuela
 - Second- Dakota Neal
 - Third- Sarah Olson
- Extemporaneous-intermediate division**
- First- Wyatt Wilson
 - Second- Miriam Olson
 - Third- Colt Robertson
- Extemporaneous- junior division**
- First- Clarissa Smith
 - Second- Allie Allen
 - Third- Kelsey Smith

For information about the MCN 4-H Program, ‘like’ the organization’s Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/pages/Creek-Nation-4-H/545893172206599?fref=ts, or call Billy Haltom at: 918-732-7628.

MCN working to implement VAWA provisions



MNN File Graphic

Multi-entity push underway to update tribal code

Sterling CospertMNN Editor

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation is in the process of preparing to implement the jurisdictional powers approved by the March 6, 2013 Violence Against Women Act reauthorization, which added provisions allowing individual tribes to prosecute non-Native on Native sexual violence occurring on their land.

According to stipulations in the law, tribes were not allowed to exercise these powers until two years later unless the U.S. Attorney General’s Office confirmed their ability to meet VAWA guidelines regarding the rights of a defendant.

Shelly Harrison, prosecutor with the MCN Attorney General’s Office said that MCN attended VAWA pilot project meetings during this time period and coordinated with other tribes on best practices for implementing, but is still working on making the necessary changes internally.

“While we were in that process, we were bringing together the different groups who had an interest in it like the Family Violence Prevention Program, Lighthorse, the courts and during those discussions, there were other aspects that relate to handling cases involving domestic violence that we felt we need to change in the code as well,” Harrison said.

She gave details on these changes.

“Documentation, all of the forms that need to be filled out when they’re in court and how the actual jury pools are going to work,” Harrison said. “All of that stuff needs to be changed in the code.”

Harrison said progress has been made however.

“The majority of everything as far as the courts have to do as far as having legal counsel, having things recorded, having our codes published, all of that stuff is already taken care of,” Harrison said. “It’s just changing some

of the language in the code to allow the jurisdiction and to make sure we’re covering the rights in the code.”

Under VAWA, the jury selection for sexual violence cases has to include non-Natives unlike other tribal criminal proceedings.

She explained how MCN is looking to address this.

“Our current draft has employees of the Nation as we pull for non-Natives,” she said. “It has to be a part of our community since when we’re working for the Nation, you are basically part of the community. That’s the best plan we have right now for that.”

The act defines sexual violence as domestic and dating violence, sexual assault and criminal violations of protection orders.

She outlined the prospective timetable and process from there.

“Hopefully in the next few months we’ll get all that feedback from everybody and be

try to work with DOJ and the BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) to see if there’s a facility that they could be placed at so that it saves cost to the Nation.”

MCN District Court Judge Greg Bigler spoke again on concerns he raised regarding the cost of appeals in a ‘Muscogee Nation News’ April 15, 2013 article.

“You could probably talk to the Attorney General specifically but it’s like anything else we do where we are asserting our self-determination, it costs money to assert your rights as a government because if you do, the state and others are going to resist it,” Bigler said.

However, he said several tribes have already exercised this jurisdiction without incident.

“They prosecuted them and either they pled guilty or were found guilty and that was that, nothing unusual happened,” Bigler said. “That’s not to say it won’t at some point but whether that’s a likely chance or not, I don’t know.”

Bigler believes that MCN will provide the necessary resources in the event of an appeal.

“They have every step so far.

From 100 years back to assertions of our litigation...asserting the tribal courts’ right to exist, litigating and protecting our rights in the car tag cases,” Bigler said. “They’ve always done that.”

He views the implementation of VAWA at MCN as a step towards further self-determination.

“I think that this is a great time where we see the door cracked open a little bit for the tribe to reassert their jurisdiction and I think we are taking full advantage of it,” Bigler said.

Harrison recommends that Muscogee (Creek) citizens who are victims of domestic violence call the MCN Lighthorse Police Department at: 918-732-7800 for fast response and FVPP for support at: 918-732-7869.

“Their advocates would be able to help them navigate the system and act as a liaison between Lighthorse and them and my office or the courts,” Harrison said.

One difference with this project is that MCN Tribal Construction Services will act as oversight contractor for quality control purposes.

Construction Engineer James Allred explained that after the architect has finished the design, the department will start taking bids for a general contractor to build the facility.

Allred expects to begin accepting bids in 60-90 days.

How to: apply for hardship assistance

Department helps citizens with breaks in income

Darren DeLauneMNN Reporter

OKMULGEE, Okla. — According to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation website, the MCN Social Services Department consists of multiple programs.

Applications for hardship assistance are one of the most common requests the department receives.

The program provides assistance to enrolled Muscogee (Creek) citizens who have had a break in income or an extenuating circumstance causing a financial hardship beyond their control.

Direct vendor payments may be used towards shelter or utility costs up to \$500 per year.

Step 1 — Applicants must meet certain guidelines and provide the following information:

- Citizenship cards for all household members or a print-out from the MCN Citizenship Office.

- Copy of Social Security cards for every member in the household

- Birth certificate and/or driver license for non-Indian household members

- Income verification for every member in the household

- Description/reason why there was a break in income

- Bill for which you are requesting assistance for

- Additional information could be required.

Step 2 — Applications must be filled out in full.

The MCN Social Services

hardship application is available on the MCN website at: www.mcn-nsn.gov.

Go to the ‘Departments’ tab and select ‘Social Services’ in the dropdown box. When that page is open, look to the left to see the choices and find the ‘Hardship’ hyperlink. The hardship application is close to the middle and highlighted in red.

Click to download the application and write clearly while filling it out.

Step 3 — Turn in the application

The MCN Social Services Department now accepts walk-ins at their location: 2971 N. Wood Drive in Okmulgee, OK, the MCN Southern Regional Office: 333 S. Washita in Wetumka, OK or in Jenks (see media release on page 2). The client may be able to meet with a caseworker that day.

The application can also be turned in through fax at: 918-549-2494, email at: socialserv@mcn-nsn.gov or mailed in to the MCN Social Services Department at: P.O. Box 580 Okmulgee, OK 74447.

The caseworker determines applicant eligibility. If there are other documents needed for the application, the caseworker will let you know.

The department is located between the MCN Housing Department and Food Distribution, north of Oklahoma Loop 56 near the main MCN Tribal Complex at U.S. Highway 75 in Okmulgee or in Jenks (see media release on page 2).

For more information regarding the hardship application and other programs within the MCN Social Services Department call: 918-549-2445.

MCN holds event to bring employees' children to work

Employees share daily routine with children

Chelsie RichProject Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Mvs-koke Nation Youth Services held the first ever Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day May 29 at the College of the Muscogee Nation and MCN Tribal Complex in Okmulgee.

While most youth are spending their summer relaxing, some students decided to make the most of it by experiencing and learning new things.

The goals of the event were to expose youth to the important work of their parent/guardian, show youth the value of their education and its connection to the workplace.

Youth, grades fifth-10th and 15-years-old and younger were eligible to attend.

The event featured activities for the youth and their parents/guardian, including on the job exercises developed by the parent/guardian’s department or program.

“We’re providing a lot of different activities, workshops, resource fair, there will be tours of the complex, the college and even a Creek Fit workout session,” MNYS Director Nancy

Mason said.

The event also provided the youth an opportunity to develop a personal career plan and increase knowledge of the employment opportunities with and recourses of MCN.

Employees took advantage of the opportunity to show their children what they do at work.

Gano Perez brought his son Kade Perez to work with him.

“I brought Kade... to show him what I actually do at work to pay the bills and what the tribe offers the community; to show him around the complex,” Gano said.

Gano is a GIS cultural technician for the MCN Cultural Preservation Department.

“He does pretty interesting work... It’s pretty fun to get to learn about the whole complex,” Kade said.

This year, the event was limited to non-health Okmulgee worksites and the employee must have registered and obtained approval by their supervisor to participate.

“It’s kind of small this year but it’s something we want to build on and maybe have it as an annual event,” Mason said.

For more information contact Youth Services at: 918-549-2557 or youthservices@mcn-nsn.gov.

HEALTH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ducing the use of outside entities to provide services,” Smith said.

The facility will provide services including: primary care, audiology, optometry, dental, physical therapy, dialysis, behavioral health services, podiatry as well as a pharmacy with drive-through, specialty clinic

and wellness center.

“The one thing that is important to our people is to have the ability to have resources where their health is being addressed,” MCN Principal Chief George Tiger said.

One Architecture Managing Principal and CEO Shelby Navarro, a Muscogee (Creek) citizen, designed the new facility along with the new MCN Community Hospital in Okemah.

Muscogee (Creek) citizen finances ongoing education through sports



Submission

Muscogee (Creek) citizen Raquel Grant grew up in small town Oklahoma and created a path for herself through college athletics to pursue her education.

Grant focuses on being a student before athletics

Chelsie Rich/Project Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Muscogee (Creek) citizen Raquel Grant grew up in small town Oklahoma, and created a path for herself to pursue her education through college athletics.

Grant graduated from Wewoka High School in Wewoka and signed to play Division II basketball at Southwestern College in Winfield, Kan.

“I’m the only one from my school in Wewoka history to sign to play basketball and to finish it,” Grant said.

Due to an injury, Grant was unable to play her freshman year and she transferred to Eastern Oklahoma State College in Wilburton.

While at EOSC, Grant made the dean’s honor roll, played in the Region II Championship game twice, and received the All-Conference Region Team Award, All-Tourney Award and 2015 Most Outstanding Athlete.

Grant made First Team All-Defense, was second in the nation for steals and led the team in scoring with minutes played.

“I’ve experienced and seen so many new people and new abilities. It drives me to be better; to become a better person,” Grant said.

Grant graduated with her associate degree in general studies from EOSC.

Afterwards, she signed a letter of intent to Friends University in Wichita, Kan., to continue playing basketball and finish her degree in health management and then continue on to pursue a nursing degree.

“I need to be more of a student because grades will make you get to where you want to be,” Grant said. “I will have three degrees by the time I graduate.”

Grant shared about how being from a small town has advantages and disadvantages.

“It makes you feel good but it also makes me feel stressful... you don’t want to fail,” Grant said. “It’s a good thing because without them, I wouldn’t have the drive to do better; to show them that a small class student can do something with their lives.”

Grant has been inspired by her father to reach this goal.

“He always wanted me to live my dreams and he pushes me to where I can have it. Without him, I wouldn’t be here,” Grant said.

She shared advice for seeking success in collegiate athletics.

“Basketball will always be there in sports but your grades will continue to make your lives better for your major,” Grant said.

Grant is a member of the Wind Clan and the daughter of Lorie Proctor and Mandrill Grant of Wewoka.

CMN student respondent shares educational journey



Chelsie Rich/MNN

Muscogee (Creek) citizen Codie Artusee was selected as student respondent for the 2015 College of the Muscogee Nation commencement ceremony held April 24 at the CMN campus in Okmulgee, Okla.

Challenge Bowl competition inspires road to success

Chelsie Rich/Project Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Muscogee (Creek) citizen Codie Artusee was selected as student respondent for the 2015 College of the Muscogee Nation commencement ceremony held April 24 at the CMN campus in Okmulgee.

Every year, CMN faculty selects a graduating student to speak during the commencement ceremony. These students are selected on academic persistence and their demonstration of the college’s core values.

“I was very nervous and honored at the same time because I know it’s a very high honor to be asked to speak at graduation to represent my classmates,” Artusee said.

The core CMN values are respect, integrity, responsibility, humility and wisdom.

“I have finally done what I thought I was going to do. I’ve finally molded my life around the core values of this college and to be asked to be the respondent, means I have embodied at least some of these,” Artusee said.

Artusee has had many accomplishments on his educational journey and looks forward to the future.

While attending Dewar High School, Artusee participated in the MCN Challenge Bowl for two years and won first place both times.

turning to CMN to further his education.

While at CMN, Artusee was named to the president’s honor roll, earned an Associate of Arts in Native American studies and a certificate in Mvskoke language studies.

“It’s been wonderful. I consider this college literally like a second home,” Artusee said. “The faculty is very friendly, very helpful no matter what kind of questions you have, they’ll answer them to the best of their abilities.”

Artusee plans to continue his education by obtaining a Bachelor of Arts in information studies from the University of Oklahoma.

“I’m going to take a little bit of a break before I continue my education but then I’ll go for my bachelor’s and master’s,” Artusee said.

Artusee’s long-term goal is then to obtain a master’s degree in library and information studies degree.

Artusee is a member of the Raccoon Clan and the son of Audie Artusee and the late Lori Robertson.

“IT’S BEEN WONDERFUL, I CONSIDER THIS COLLEGE LITERALLY LIKE A SECOND HOME.”

— CMN CLASS OF 2015 STUDENT RESPONDENT CODIE ARTUSEE

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Parade2015

• Saturday, June 27 @ 10 a.m.
• Downtown Okmulgee.

The parade will follow a route along Main Street (6th) passing directly in front of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Council House.

THEME: We Are Mvskoke

EVERYONE WELCOME! Enter a float advertising your company. All MCN departments, organizations, communities, churches & ceremonial grounds are encouraged to enter.

PLEASE CHECK ONE.

☐ MCN Department

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☐ Dignitary (Tribal Leader, Royalty, National Council, State Delegate)

☐ Other. Please specify.

PLEASE CHECK ONE.

☐ Contestant ☐ Recognition Only

Organization Name

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☐ Walking ☐ Motorcycle Group

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Include a brief statement that will be used as an introduction during the parade.


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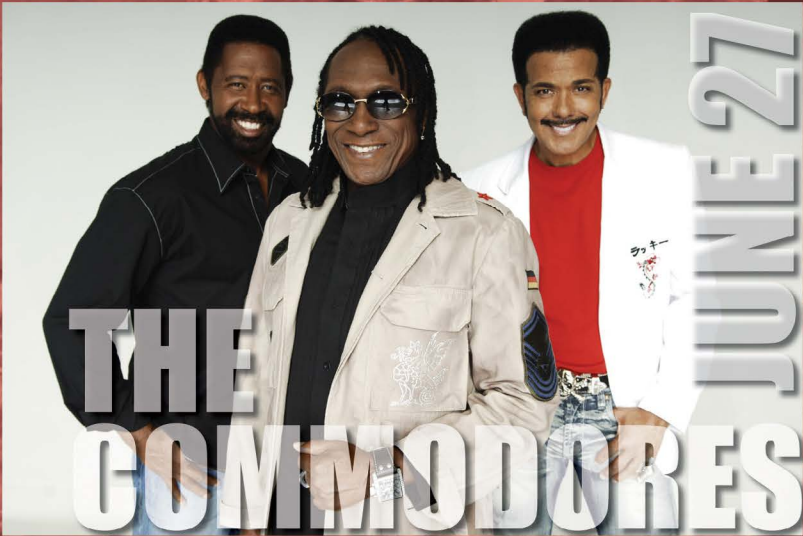


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Native juveniles lost to gaps in communication

Jessica McBride/Media Coordinator



Shane Holuby/Intern

Oklahoma Juvenile Affairs and tribes in the state have collaborated to form the Oklahoma Juvenile Justice Task Force to help Native American youth in the justice system.

Task force pushes to build bridge to success for ‘voiceless’ youth.

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Located in the heart of Oklahoma, 14 special sites in Norman hold youth lost from society. These sites are not schools, but rehabilitation centers, detention centers and jails for juveniles who started crossing the strong arm of the law at a young age. Native American youth from all over the state serve time in these facilities, amounting anywhere from two weeks to eight months.

“They’re on a pipeline from juvenile detention centers to dropping out, to going on to prison,” Norman Public Schools Indian Education Coordinator Lucyann Harjo said. “These are kids in a pipeline of abuse, violent homes and they’re just stuck in this.”

Harjo works with Native juveniles in Norman assisting them with their educational needs.

For some time, Harjo has felt that she tutored the youth, and when their time was up, she has simply given them a pat on the back and told them ‘good luck.’

“I call them children without a voice, crying out for help and it’s not there,” Harjo said. “And so they stay in this rut... We’re trying to help them, but what we’re doing is not even near (enough)... it’s a heavy burden on my heart.”

Harjo said it would take better communication and collaboration on the local, state and tribal level to break the cycle and keep youth from falling through the cracks.

“It’s just going to take a lot more educating tribes to collaborate well with all of these state agencies, with juvenile detention centers to address the concerns that we’re seeing,” Harjo said.

Like an answered prayer, Oklahoma Juvenile Affairs and tribes have been working behind the scenes to intervene in the youth’s lives.

HOW DID STATISTICS UNCOVER THE ISSUE?

Through the voiced concerns of individuals like Harjo and statistics that highlighted a deeper problem, gaps in services for Native American youth were seen by various entities.

To receive federal funding, Oklahoma Juvenile Affairs is required to produce reports on DMC (Disproportionate Minority Contact).

DMC is defined as the disproportionate number of minority youth who come in contact with the juvenile justice system as compared to the racial and ethnic populations of the same area.

OJA contracted with the University of Oklahoma to complete ‘The Analysis of DMC in Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Lawton Final Report,’ which was published Jan. 15, 2012.

“Everybody knows that minorities are overrepresented (in the justice system). What we were really looking to do was

not just find out, you know; to the extent, but look at why that minority overrepresentation exists,” report author and OU Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice Dr. Paul Ketchum said.

The report combined court, arrest, infraction and crime data with interviews from individuals working in the juvenile justice system in the Lawton, Oklahoma City and Tulsa areas.

The data included all minority groups as compared to the white population.

“We got about what we expected. The numbers are disturbing in many ways,” Ketchum said. “Blacks and Native Americans are two-and-a-half to three times as likely as whites to be arrested in Oklahoma. You know; and that’s assuming that

The full Analysis of DMC in Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Lawton Final Report is available at: www.ok.gov/okyouth/documents/Analysis%20of%20DMC%20in%20Oklahoma%20City,Tulsa,%20and%20Lawton.pdf.

white juvenile criminal rates are kind of your baseline.”

After publication, Oklahoma State Rep. Seneca Scott proposed an interim study narrowing the scope to Native American juveniles in order to provide more information for the Native American Caucus.

“...It was brought to my attention that although the numbers were smaller overall, the number of Indian kids in juvenile detention, still our rates were not decreasing,” Scott said. “And that was unacceptable to us Native American advocates...”

According to data on Native American juveniles obtained by the Juvenile Online Tracking System (JOLTS), in 2012, minority disparity occurs at different points of contact during the judicial process

MCN boundaries. Those that lie partially within the jurisdiction include: Hughes, Mayes, Muskogee, Rogers, Seminole, Tulsa and Wagoner Counties.

Counties were broken into three categories describing DMC at arrest—low, moderate and high.

Almost all counties within the jurisdiction exhibited Native American juvenile overrepresentation at arrest.

Creek County was categorized as high for arrest figures of Native American youth. See Figure 1.

For other points of contact, counties were categorized as having equal representation or overrepresentation of Native American juveniles as compared to the white population.

Creek County reported Native American overrepresentation at detention. See Figure 2.

Hughes County reported insufficient data at four of the five contact points.

Mayes County reported Native American overrepresentation occurring at three of the five contact points. See Figure 2.

McIntosh County reported insufficient data at four of the five contact points.

Muskogee County reported Native American overrepresentation at court referral and delinquency. See Figure 2.

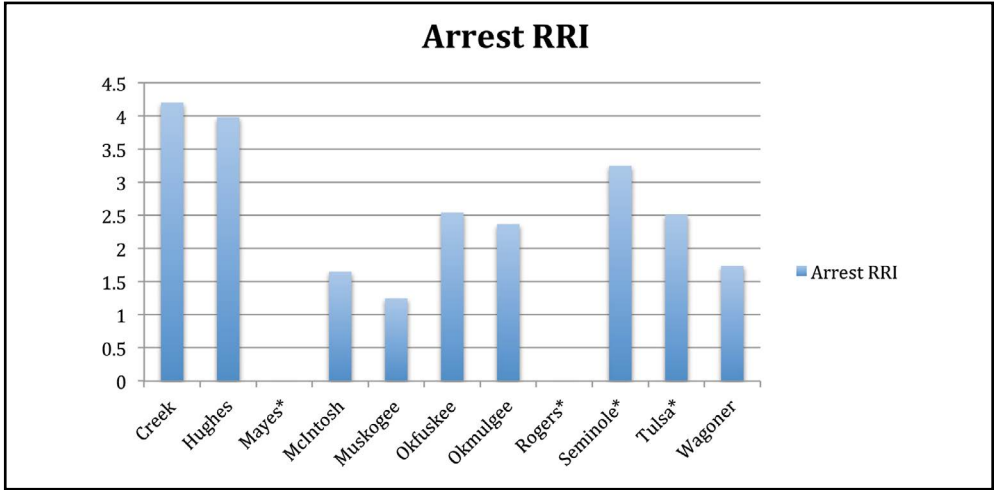
Okfuskee County reported insufficient data at three of the five contact points.

Okmulgee County reported Native American overrepresentation at court referral.

Rogers County reported Native American overrepresentation at four of the five contact points. See Figure 2.

Seminole County reported Native

Figure 1



RRI = Native Rate ÷ White Rate

consisting of arrest, referrals to court, detention placement, petitions filed and delinquency.

These statistics were measured using the Relative Rate Index (RRI).

The equation used for calculation is the minority rate of Native American juveniles divided by the rate of white juveniles.

All counties in Oklahoma were reviewed. Statistics for the 11-county MCN jurisdiction were obtained, but the data reflected counties as a whole including portions of counties that lie outside of the

American overrepresentation at court referral and delinquency.

Tulsa County reported Native American overrepresentation at court referral and secure detention.

Wagoner County reported Native American overrepresentation at court referral.

OJA would like to conduct surveys based upon specific tribal jurisdiction, specific offense, locations and interventions.

An updated DMC data survey is scheduled for June.

“It’s not the kids that are different. It’s the systems that are treating them differently.”

— Dr. Paul Ketchum

WHAT DO THE REPORTS MEAN?

The 2012 JOLTS statistics reflect that Native American overrepresentation occurs throughout Oklahoma at many contact points during the juvenile judicial process.

Ketchum also noted many items stood out to him in his DMC report to OJA.

“What was really weird about it was the rates of overrepresentation were identical,” Ketchum said. “So even though you had completely different styles in how likely and how often they arrested out of 100 stops, the overrepresentation of blacks, Latinos and Native Americans remain the same; which was just really telling.”

Ketchum indicated interactions between whites and non-whites were usually through work and not through the neighborhood they lived in or friendships.

“So there’s this very segregated lifestyle.

And most of them it didn’t dawn on them until I was asking these questions about things that they really thought about because whiteness is kind of the norm,” Ketchum said. “So, you know; to their credit many of them were kind of shocked and disturbed to find how little they interacted with non-whites other than through work.”

He concluded that the differences in contact with law enforcement and the judicial system were not due to the youth themselves.

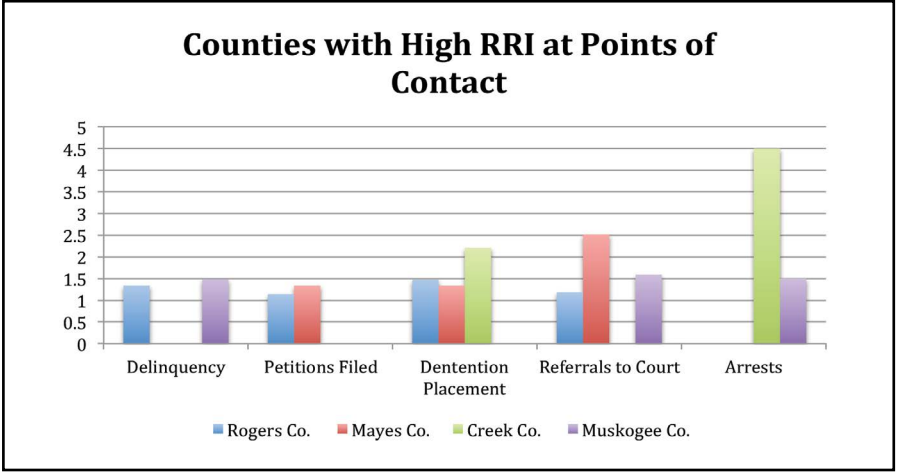
“So the gist of it becomes that most of this overrepresentation, most of the difference between arrest rates, conviction rates, type of punishment, etc.; most of that difference is due to some sort of bias in the system,” Ketchum said. “It’s not the kids that are different. It’s the systems that are treating them differently.”

A majority of interviews Ketchum conducted reflected the person’s view that different races and ethnicities have different family values.

However, through his own investigations and national research, he has found that this is not the case.

“It shows that family values and structures are very similar across racial and ethnic groups,” Ketchum said. “So it’s just a misperception.”

Figure 2



WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

MCN National Council Rep. Dode Barnett said people tend to shy away from juvenile justice issues, but that does not mean youth problems should be ignored.

“They are forgotten people. It’s crazy to me,” Barnett said. “On the one hand again, I understand the reluctance but these are human beings... We may help them and they may fail, but I know if we don’t help them it’s 100 percent guaranteed that they are likely to fail. We have to help them.”

Oklahoma Juvenile Affairs Deputy Division Director of Community Based Youth Services Anna Kelly said OJA was

not surprised by the DMC findings, but wanted to address the issue.

“Prior even to that report, we were aware of the issue and we were attempting to address it,” Kelly said.

Ketchum plans to conduct another study analyzing the rate at which individuals of various races and ethnicities commit crimes. He said having an actual number would incite change.

“I don’t think that’s as powerful as saying that 93 percent or whatever the number is... We as a society love numbers, so that makes it harder for policy makers to

JUSTICE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

ignore,” Ketchum said.

The Oklahoma Native American Juvenile Justice Task Force was created in fall 2014. The purpose of the group is to preserve and protect Native American juvenile rights through communication and advocacy between multiple federal, state, local and tribal agencies.

ONAJJTF aims to strengthen the connection between juveniles and their tribes and promote prevention, intervention, reunification and reintegration for at-risk Native youth.

“The task force has been the first opportunity for us to partner with tribes and talk about the youth that we have in common and what the tribes could bring to the table as services for their youth,” Kelly said.

Barnett serves as the co-chair for the task force.

Ketchum said the task force fascinates him because instead of having a short-lived effort to lead a charge, it has become a liaison between the state, tribes and law enforcement.

“I suspect it will eventually no longer be called a task force but be some sort of, you know; committee or some

name for a group. And act on a more permanent basis just because they found so much that needs to be done that they can kind of act as a coordinator for,” Ketchum said. “So, I have great hope for it.”

Scott said convening has helped to get agencies on the same page.

“It’s six months underway and I think the real exciting part is going to be on, what is the different information sharing we have about tribal code updates down the road that might need to be aligned, and diversion programs that are best practices,” Scott said.

Kelly said OJA sees the collaboration between entities as a triple win for the youth, state and tribes.

“It seems like everybody that’s involved has a lot of passion,” Kelly said.

Kelly said relationships with each tribe would differ due to tribal resources and other resources available in each area.

All involved reiterated the task force is in its infancy stages and will be working to fill in gaps in services.

A tribal liaison from each of the eight OJA districts will join the task force. OJA has also invited a liaison from each Nation to join the conversation.

The Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes passed Resolution 15-09 on Jan. 9, in support of ONAJJTF and working with OJA and tribal govern-

ments to address the issue. **See info bar.**

Scott authored Oklahoma House Bill 1834, which passed March 9 and a similar measure passed the Oklahoma Senate on April 20. **See info bar.**

The law requires juvenile justice agents to inform the tribe within three days if a Native American youth is taken into custody.

Scott said that the law, which is similar to the Indian Child Welfare Act, fills a gap that was indeterminate on whether tribes could be involved in juvenile cases.

The law becomes effective Nov. 1. “Technically we’re the second state in the U.S. to require tribal notification,” Barnett said.

Barnett said MCN would be able to tend to the case, follow the youth in court and make sure that educational and health needs are met.

For MCN, the National Council passed NCA 15-018 on Jan. 26, funding \$107,987 for the MCN Children and Family Services Tribal Juvenile Justice Program. **See info bar.**

The money will be used to hire a tribal juvenile justice officer to address juvenile delinquency that occurs on trust or restricted land, and associated costs such as supplies, vehicle usage and fuel.

The position is filled, and the individual will be trained by the Nov. 1 effective

date.

Barnett said there would also be a need for social workers for intervention and prevention. Details have not been announced.

The Council passed TR 15-058 on April 25, for the ability to use the Sac and Fox Nation detention center for the MCN Juvenile Justice Program if needed. **See info bar.**

Barnett also serves on the MCN Juvenile Justice Task Force. The MCN task force utilizes representatives from Children and Family Services, Youth Services, Lighthorse Tribal Police, as well as the Reintegration Program, Supreme Court, National Council and Attorney General’s Office.

A common theme among the task force members was the collaboration timing.

“The timing is here. The timing is now. Now we have to act. Now we have to do something,” Barnett said.

Back in Norman, Harjo is excited about the future.

“There’s just so much need there that I’m really glad that we’re focusing on it and we’re trying to get help and we’re trying to educate people about this huge concern and getting the word out so that we might have a better system in place for our children,” Harjo said.

Legislation

Legislation passed to address Native American overrepresentation in the juvenile justice system

Muscogee (Creek) Nation

NCA 15-018 passed 12-0 on Jan. 26, appropriating \$107,987 from the Motor Vehicle Tax Fund Account to the MCN Children and Family Services Tribal Juvenile Justice Program to comply with MCN Code Annotated Title 6 titled, ‘Children and Family Relations Regarding Juvenile Delinquency.’ MCN Principal Chief George Tiger signed the amendment Jan. 27.

TR 15-058 passed 14-0 on April 25, forming an agreement with the Sac and Fox Nation to use their detention center for the MCN Juvenile Justice Program if necessary. Tiger signed the resolution April 28.

Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes

Resolution 15-09 passed unanimously Jan. 9, in support of the Oklahoma Native American Juvenile Justice Task Force in developing memorandum of understandings between the Oklahoma Juvenile Affairs and tribal government systems.



State of Oklahoma

House Bill 1834 passed March 9 with a vote of 93-1 and seven members excused. Reps. Seneca Scott and AJ Griffin authored the bill.

HB 1834 passed in the Senate April 20 with a vote of 44-0 and four excused.

Gov. Mary Fallin signed the law May 6 stating OJA or the local agency, “shall notify the primary tribe or nation of membership or citizenship within three judicial days of completing an intake of such determination,” if any juvenile is determined to have Native American ancestry that would make them eligible for citizenship.

Citizen involved in shooting incident sent home from hospital



Amanda Rutland/MNN

Muscogee (Creek) citizen Monroe Bird III (Trey) is moved from his hospital bed to his wheel chair using a lift, while Trey’s mother, Zondra Magness and father, Monroe Bird Jr., along with five nurses and other individuals assist.

Health insurance company denies medical benefits

Jessica McBride/Editorial Assistant

TULSA, Okla. — June 1 was bitter-sweet for Muscogee (Creek) citizen Monroe Bird III (Trey) and his family. After almost four months in hospital care, Trey was sent back to his home in Boley.

“I feel a little down, you know, I should be going to rehab instead of going home,” Trey said.

Because of insurance denial, he was sent home instead of rehab because the family could not afford the rehabilitation bill on their own.

Trey, who is quadriplegic, feels he has been stripped of the opportunity to better his life.

“I want to walk, you know, I don’t want to be paralyzed for the rest of my life,” he said.

At six-foot-eight, Trey said he misses the ability to play basketball, play drums at his church, pick up his niece, hold a cup to his mouth to drink and hug his mother.

“I’m completely dependent on everybody,” Trey said.

He is getting more comfortable being on a ventilator, but must be monitored 24 hours a day in the event the pipes get clogged.

Trey was involved in a shooting incident Feb. 4 with security guard Ricky Stone at the Deerfield Estates Apartment Complex in Tulsa.

Stone approached the vehicle Trey was in along with a 15-year-old female, and

asked for identification. According to reports, Trey backed his vehicle into Stone, causing him to roll onto the trunk and into the back window.

Stone fired three shots at Trey as he drove away, hitting him once and paralyzing him from the neck down.

Trey’s sister lives at the apartment complex.

Tulsa County District Attorney Steve Kunzweiler declined to charge Stone in the incident citing that the shooting was justified under Oklahoma’s self-defense laws.

“I’m the victim. I wasn’t doing nothing wrong, and it’s changed my life completely,” Trey said.

Stone was charged May 29 with possession of a controlled drug, after marijuana was discovered in his vehicle while police investigated the shooting incident. He was charged with misdemeanor possession of a controlled substance, which upon conviction carries a maximum sentence of one-year imprisonment and a \$1,000 fine.

“We think the insurance company should consider that as they continue to deny Trey the healthcare benefits that he so desperately needs,” one of Trey’s attorneys Damario Solomon-Simmons said.

Solomon-Simmons said that they do not know if Kunzweiler’s decision to not prosecute Stone affected the insurance company’s decision to decline medical coverage.

“Our main focus is to making sure he can get the health insurance that he needs,” Solomon-Simmons said. “We have an appeal we’ve filed in that particular case... Each day he does not get into rehabilitation, it’s really hurting him.”

Solomon-Simmons estimates that

the family has spent around \$25,000 for items needed to care for Trey including a handicap accessible van, wheelchair and lift to move him from the wheelchair to his bed.

Family spokesperson Tezlyn Figaro said that a civil suit has been filed against the apartment complex, Stone and the security guard company Smith and Sons Inc. for the shooting incident.

Trey’s father, Monroe Bird Jr. is very upset that the insurance company has declined medical coverage.

“I’m really puzzled by the decision of the insurance company and also the DA,” Bird said.

He also expressed frustration that Stone was charged with marijuana possession months after the shooting incident.

Kunzweiler said that they were waiting on lab testing on the evidence collected at the scene before they could determine whether or not charges would be filed for the possession.

Bird explained that Trey’s mother, Zondra Magness would be providing care at her home in Boley instead of going to rehab.

“Now she has to turn into a nurse overnight and provide my son with round-the-clock care,” Bird said.

Trey’s bedroom will need to be remodeled to care for his needs.

Bird lives in Tulsa, and has been at the hospital when he could get away from work to give Magness breaks in caring for Trey. He plans to visit his son at least once a week.

For more information about the family’s cause, visit: www.standformonroe.com. For detailed information about the shooting incident see more coverage in the June 1 ‘Muscogee Nation News’ issue.



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Muscogee (Creek) Nation Community and Tribal Events

Millions of Oklahoma citizens disenfranchised

Biggest circus I’ve seen since Barnum and Bailey

Oklahoma House District 13 State Rep. Jerry McPeak/ Muscogee (Creek) citizen

The way I survive at the Capitol is to attempt to find humor in the “goings on.” But that is getting harder and harder to do. Tulsa and Oklahoma City keep getting larger and larger portions of the pie, and the rural areas “suck the hind teat.” (I wouldn’t write that for Tulsa or Oklahoma City but you folks understand that).

Representatives and senators who represent over half the population in Oklahoma were not asked what they thought of the new state budget – but were rather “reported to.” When I pointed that out to Rep. Earl Sears, budget negotiator for the House, he stated on the House Floor, “I didn’t call a doctor from Harvard or an economist from OU.” That answer is an indication of the aloof and snobby approach to this budget.

Do any of you like to “horse trade,” make deals? Because if you do, watching the House and Senate operate would be a thrill. Unfortunately, too often, some Representatives and Senators trade their moral compass for political favors or potential campaign donations. The last few days of session outshine a circus for the goings-on.

This morning a bill that the author admits certifies that the State of Oklahoma cannot NOT sell water for a profit, after failing yesterday, will get new life today and will pass. Why is that so important?

Poor management is why there is a budget deficit – NOT oil and gas prices. The State of Oklahoma sells oil and gas for a profit.

Then why can we not sell water that comes from wells at a state prison facility? I’m not talking about price gouging but a reasonable price with funds going to the prison system. By the way, most prison workers haven’t had a pay raise in years and they are grossly understaffed.

Also, the budget crafted by Sears and Senator Clark Jolley cut funding to county roads and bridges by \$72 million and healthcare for the elderly and poor by \$47 million. That shortage shuts down another \$65 million of federal matching funds.

Old folks and sick people lose over \$110 million and

the federal government sends Oklahoma tax dollars to another state. Aren’t we smart?

Following the same line of thought: While Sears and others who sit near him talk about their support of veterans, mental healthcare facilities are shut down AND in the last two years, state funds to veterans has been cut by \$5.1 million. “What you do speaks so loud I can’t hear what you say.”

Going to the lake around here where we live is a fun, inexpensive way to spend an afternoon or weekend. Unlike the rich folks who build fancy lake homes and use it as a getaway, for us, we can do something fun without a cost. Tourism’s budget was cut \$8.5 million.

The state has already closed some parks, privatized others, has raised fees. These are the same state parks and lakes you paid taxes to build. Just another example of average income and common folks paying for the tax cut to rich folks and tax credits to big business.

Circus, circus, circus! There is a piece of legislation titled ‘Supreme Court Justices.’

There is a section of language in the bill about school children and testing.

Do those seem like the same subject to you? Me neither! But guess what: the chairman of the committee said those were the same subject and could, therefore, be combined in the same bill. When asked to show the rule that allowed such, the response was “because the chairman said so.”

The whole week has been like this. I have seen more anger up here before, but never so little respect for the rules. Rules don’t count if those in charge don’t want them to count. What a great example for the people!

State law: fund education by April 1. Actuality: completely disregarded year after year with no consequences. The House and Senate didn’t do their job but suffer no consequences. Leaders say they support education, but their votes do not convey that.

In summary: I am home with the folks I like and respect. We adjourned a week early, and it’s a good thing, because I couldn’t really tolerate another week of the circus.

I am proud to serve House District 13 but frustrated by the process. So let’s get our state straightened out. Worse things are happening in Oklahoma than nationally...and that is saying a lot!

MIC TREASURER ELECTION SET FOR JUNE 18

MORRIS, Okla. — An election for the Morris Indian Community vacant treasurer board position is set for 6 p.m., June 18 at the MIC building, 17165 Hwy 62, Morris OK.

All community members are invited to come and vote. Those interested in being on the ballot may contact Gena Nieto at: 918-752-9466 or Linda Tenequer at: 918-752-8097.

BENEFIT POWWOW SET FOR JUNE 20

MUSKOGEE, Okla. — The fourth annual Murrow Indian Children’s Home Benefit Powow is set for June 20 at the Bacone College student life center, 2414 E. Shawnee Bypass in Muskogee.

All drums, royalties and dancers are invited.

For event information call: 918-682-2586. For vendor information call: 918-616-4577.

FAMILY REUNION SET FOR JUNE 20

WETUMKA, Okla. — A family reunion for the descendants of Nehar and Sallie Yahola has been set for June 20 at Salt Creek United Methodist Church starting at 10 a.m.

Everyone is welcome and please bring a potluck dish for lunch.

CMCA GATHERING SET FOR AUG. 1

RIVERSIDE, Calif. — The annual California Muscogee (Creek) Association has set an annual gathering for Aug. 1 at Sherman Indian High School, 9010 Magnolia, Ave, Riverside CA, 92503.

For more information contact Jeanna Spirou at: 209-518-3554 or jeannars@yahoo.com.

MCN Southern Regional schedule

MCN SRO/Media Release

WETUMKA, Okla. — The following is the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Southern Regional Office schedule for the remainder of June

June 16, 23, 30
Tax Commission
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Lunch 11-11:30 a.m.

June 24
Social Services/Employment and Training
Closed

June 29
MCN Closed

For more information call: 405-452-1100.

MCN reschedules Festival Bass Classic

MCN T&R/Media Release

EUFAULA, Okla. — The 2015 Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival Bass Classic has been rescheduled for Saturday, July 18 at Lake Eufaula.

“Due to flooding concerns, we’re rescheduling the bass tournament for the safety of our participants,” MCN Tourism and Recreation Director William Lowe said.

Teams will not need to re-register for the new date. New participants can register up to 7 p.m. on July 18.

“We are excited and hope to have even more anglers for the new date,” Lowe said.

The one-day tournament features two-angler teams competing for the chance to win the \$5,000 grand prize. The cost to enter is \$200 per boat/team.

Each team will receive two Wohali fishing rods.

Additional prizes will be awarded.

Individuals may register from 9 a.m.-7 p.m., Friday, July 17 at the South Point Pavilion in Eufaula Cove.

For additional rules and more information about the 2015 MCN Festival Bass Classic or other Festival events, visit www.creekfestival.com or call: 918-732-7992.

FAMILY REUNION SET FOR JULY 4

EUFAULA, Okla. — A family reunion for the descendants of Rev. William McCombs (1844-1929) is set for July 4 from 10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. at the Eufaula Community Center.

Please bring old photos, family stories and a pot-luck dish to share at the noon luncheon.

MNN DEADLINES

July 1 — June 22

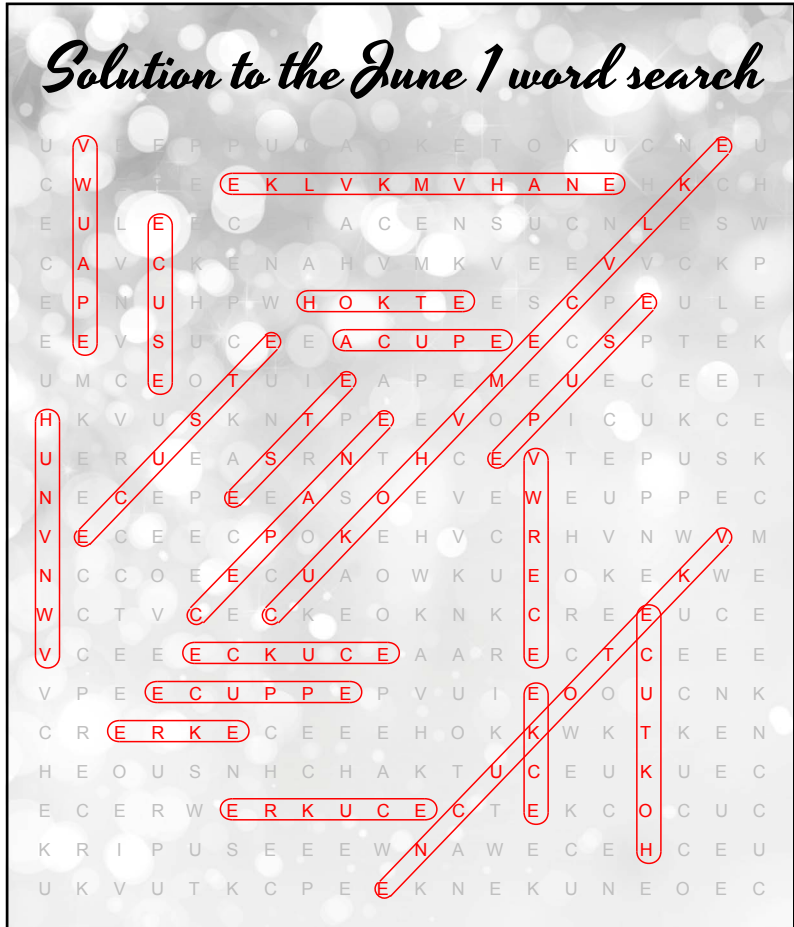
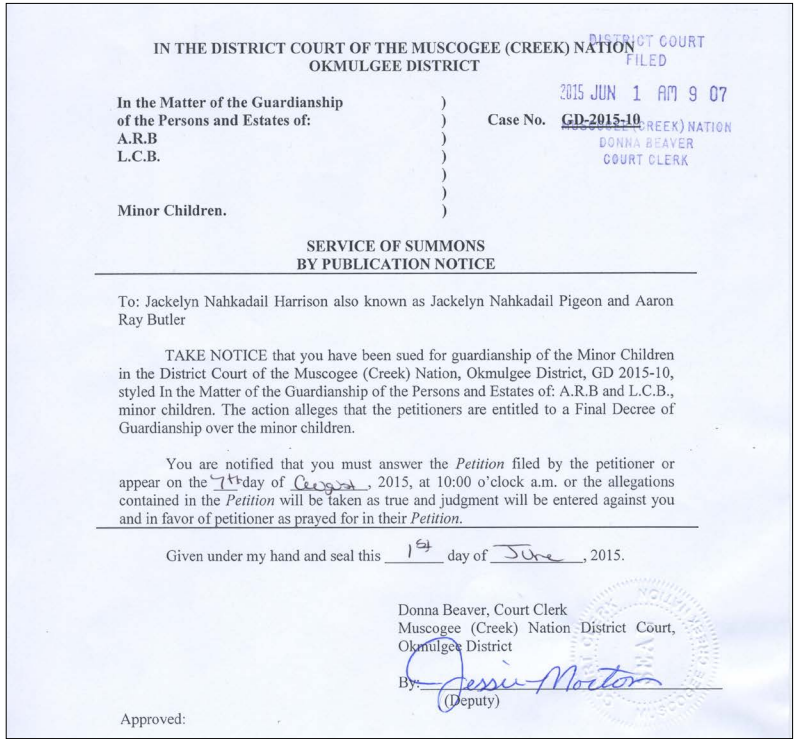
July 15 — July 7

Aug. 1 — July 24

Aug. 15 — Aug. 7

Sept. 1 — Aug. 24

Sept. 15 — Sept. 8



ANN HARDMAN OBIT

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. — Ann Hardman, the daughter of Caesar and Peggie King was born Sept. 26, 1932 in Okmulgee. She departed this life May 28, 2015 in Tahlequah at the age of 82 years, eight months and two days.

Ann always said, ‘education is the answer.’ She was admitted to Northeastern State University in September 1969 and graduated May 1972 with a Bachelor of Science in elementary education.

She pursued higher education, earning a master’s in counseling May 1988. Ann was employed through Tahlequah Public Schools as an art teacher for six years at Cherokee Elementary School.

She retired from counselor of Porter Public School in 1995. Ann was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force and served from 1953 to her honorable discharge in 1956.

Ann was an artist, enjoyed sewing, gardening and loved animals of all kinds. Intelligent, thoughtful, caring and wise beyond her years, Ann touched many lives and will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved her.

Ann was preceded in death

by her: husband, SMSGT William Cecil Hardman; son, William Cecil Hardman; daughter, Cecilia Hardman Scott; brother, Jackson King; sisters, Helen McCabe and Beulah Simms and grandchildren, Michael Wayne Scott and Marissa Ann Hardman.

She is survived by a loving family, her: son, David Hardman and Ellen Wakamatsu of Moodys, Carol Bartlett and husband Robert of Norman, Cynthia Hardman, Elizabeth Hardman of Tahlequah, Patricia Hardman of Norman; two very dear and special cousins, Buddy and Carol Mason of Sand Springs, seven grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and nieces, a nephew, friends, and other relatives also survive her.

Graveside services for Ann Hardman will be held at 1:30 p.m., Saturday, June 27, 2015 in the Berryhill Cemetery, Okmulgee, OK. A luncheon will precede services 12:00-1:30 p.m.

